In the book *Full Body Burden* by Kristen Iversen, she writes about a secret facility that is set up in her community called Rocky Flats. This was a factory that was designed during the Cold War to make products for bombs.

The people in and around the Denver area were reassured that there will be no worries with this factory and that it will be safe to work in and safe for the environment. As years went on, people began to grow suspicious about Rocky Flats and what was actually going on there. People began to think that some of their animals were becoming sick due to the plutonium in the soil. Rocky Flats and its team of scientists said that the evidence was inconclusive and that the environment was safe to live in. Eventually the plant was closed due to high levels of contamination. It is now considered a wildlife refuge.

An issue in the world today that is similar to Rocky Flats is genetically modified food. This is an issue around the world, but mostly in Latin America.

Seed manufacturers are selling genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to farmers. These are products that produce crops faster and help farmers better adapt to climate changes. Scientists have warned against this saying that it may contaminate the crops and soil, and that it may cause allergies for people who are consuming the crop.

In today’s world, when people go into a grocery store they often don’t know what they are buying or where their vegetables came from. Most likely they don’t know if what they’re eating is contaminated goods or healthy food that they pay a high price for. This is an issue.
Sure, GMOs are producing food faster, but at a cost to the consumer. This is similar to Rocky Flats contaminating the Denver community and it being bad for their environment.

In Iversen’s story, the scientists were trying to cover up the dangers of plutonium, but with GMOs it’s the scientists who are trying to protect the consumers, and the farmers and seed manufacturers are looking away from the concerns of what they are doing to get ahead.

I think that I connect to the last line of the story “to speak out or to remain silent is the first and most crucial decision we can make,” because if you don’t speak out instead of just sitting back and watching, there is nothing that can be done about the situation.

Speaking out is not always the easiest option, but I believe it is the right thing to do, especially when there are health risks involved. There will always be something to stand up against; whether it is Rocky Flats in the ’50s, Love Canal in the ’70s or GMOs in the 2000s. Let’s just hope more people speak out rather than remain silent.

As the saying goes, “There is strength in numbers.”

I believe enough people spoke out about their concerns with Rocky Flats. Their fight eventually got the factory closed. I think if the scientists and consumers keep battling the farmers and seed manufacturers for safer crops, we may eventually see better labeling on fruits and vegetables. There will no longer be guessing as to what we are eating, and this is especially important for people with severe allergies.